342 They may be quite simple and bare of modern conveniences--even electricity is not necessarily needed, for there is practically no night
343 during the summer months--but invariably there is a bathhouse somewhere on the property. As a rule, the bathhouse is the first and the most important building to be erected.

The bathhouses are a characteristic feature of the Finnish landscape. Every farm has one, and almost every dwelling, no matter how modest. According to recent estimations, there are about 400,000 bathhouses, not including the big commercial ones in the cities. On Saturday evenings, when rowing on a lake, one can see smoke rising out of the chimneys of a multitude of bathhouses at the water's edge, many of them very picturesque buildings. The bathhouse, or

515 The bathhouse or
sauna, as it is called in Finnish, is heated at least every Saturday througout the year, and in the summer, during the working period in the fields, almost every day. Going to the sauna has developed in Finland into a highly ritualistic occasion. Families with small children bathe together, or grown-up men bathe separately and women and children [illegible]erwards.

● 343 In addition to the bathing room the sauna usually contains a dressing chamber and a laundry room. In the bathing room itself the most prominent feature is a special kind of stove in one corner, with round stones placed above the fireplace. The remaining space is taken up by a raised dais and miscellaneous benches, stools and water barrels. When the fire is made, the stones gradually become

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343 515 blazing hot and remain hot long after the flames have been extinguished. The preparation of the sauna is begun in the early afternoon, and it is ready for the first bathers after the evening 515 meal. At this time the men walk into the bath-house in a solemn procession, each carrying a broom made of fresh birch twigs, a towel and a clean shirt. In the sauna the bathers climb up to the dais, place their birch twigs each in a basin full of hot water, and one of the men pours water over the red-hot stones in the fire-place. The steam thus created rises up to the bathers, and after repeated pourings the temperature becomes as near to the boiling-point as human skin can endure. The effect of the heat is intensified by beating the body with birch twigs to aid circulation. After the steam-treatment the next step is to wash oneself with soap